

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 COA-01 COME-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 STR-01 CG-00 DOTE-00

DLOS-03 /067 W

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P R 011755Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4271

INFO AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY LIMA

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 0786

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EFIS, EC

SUBJECT: SEPARATION OF FISHING FINES FROM ECUADOREAN REACTION TO  
THE TRADE ACT

REF: QUITO 0783

1. IN THE LAST SEVERAL DAYS THE GOE HAS MADE WHAT APPEARS TO BE A DISTINCT EFFORT TO SEPARATE THE DETENTION AND FINING OF FISHING BOATS CAUGHT WITHOUT LICENSES AND THE SUBJECT OF ECUADOREAN ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE U.S. TRADE REFORM ACT. A STATEMENT PUT OUT BY SECRETARY OF ADMINISTRATION CARLOS AGUIRRE (WHOSE POSITION IS ANALOGOUS TO "CABINET SECRETARY") ON JANUARY 30TH AND AN EDITORIAL IN FEBRUARY 1ST'S LEADING QUITO DAILY, EL COMERCIO, BOTH REINFORCE THE CONCLUSION THAT THE GOE AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS WISHES TO AVOID INTERPRETATION THAT SEIZURES ARE RETALIATION AGAINST TRADE BILL. GOE POSTURE IS THAT IT INTENDED TO ENFORCE ITS FISHING LAWS ALL ALONG AND OCCURENCE OF WHAT IT CONSIDERS VIOLATIONS AT TIME OF TRA CONTROVERSY WAS MERE COINCIDENCE.

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2. THE CLEAREST INDICATION OF THIS DIFFERENTIATION WAS

GIVEN FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE BY ADMINISTRATION SPOKESMAN CARLOS AGUIRRE, WHO WAS ASKED FOR HIS REACTION TO A STATEMENT BY SAN DIEGO TUNA ASSOCIATION MANAGER AUGUST FELANDO TO THE EFFECT THAT THE ECUADOREAN FINES WERE IN RETALIATION AGAINST THE US TRADE BILL. AGUIRRE'S REPLY WAS REPORTED TO BE "THE SEIZURE OF US FISHING BOATS BY THE ECUADOREAN NAVY HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH REPRISAL AGAINST THE US TRADE REFORM ACT BUT RATHER WERE MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH ECUADOREAN LAW BECAUSE THOSE BOATS WERE CAUGHT FISHING WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION IN ECUADOREAN TERRITORIAL WATERS".

3. THIS POSITION WAS REFINED FURTHER IN THE LEAD EDITORIAL IN FEBRUARY 1ST'S EL COMERCIO, WHICH OFTEN IN THE IMMEDIATE PAST HAS REFLECTED HIGH-LEVEL GOE VIEWS. ENTITLED "ECUADOR'S POLICY IS NOT ONE OF REPRISALS", A TRANSLATION OF THE COMPLETE TEXT OF WHICH HAS BEEN SENT IN QUITO'S 0783, IT SAYS "THE CAPTURE OF THE FISHING BOATS DOES NOT SIGNIFY IN ANY WAY, A REPRISAL FOR THE TRADE BILL SO ENERGETICALLY AND UNANIMOUSLY CRITICIZED BY LATIN AMERICA. ECUADOR HAS NEVER AT ANY TIME ADOPTED A POLICY OF REPRISAL, BUT SOLELY OF THE LEGITIMATE DEFENSE OF ITS MARITIME JURISDICTIONAL RIGHTS. AT LEAST ON ECUADOR'S PART, THERE WAS NOT THE LEAST INTENTION OF RENEWING THE 'TUNA WAR', BUT IT HAS BEEN AND HAD TO BE THE GREAT INTERESTS OF THE CALIFORNIA FISHING FLEETS THAT ARE TO BLAME FOR THE NEW CONFLICT. ACCORDING TO THE NEWS FROM WASHINGTON, THE US GOVERNMENT MAY TRY TO AVOID AGGRAVATING THE SITUATION. BUT IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, THE INTERESTS OF THE LARGE FISHING COMPANIES, WHO HAVE NO COMPREHENSION OF THE RIGHTS OF POOR COUNTRIES OR OF A POLICY OF 'GOOD NEIGHBORS' HAS BEEN IMPOSED. AT LEAST A HOPE ARISES FROM THE ATTITUDE OF THE US SENATE, WHICH HAS JUST APPROVED A BILL PROCLAIMING A 200-MILE JURISDICTION. WITH THIS BASE, IT IS TO BE HOPED THAT THE SPECTACLE OF HEADLONG CONFRONTATION IS TO BE AVOIDED, AND A JUST SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM ACHIEVED."

BREWSTER

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